

What worries you most about Morocco?

More than our domestic situation, more than the gap between production and consumption, more than the training of educated manpower, what worries me is that Morocco seems to be losing her personality. There are a great many mothers who do not even teach their children Arabic. When I hear one of them speaking French to her little boy I see red. What's the use of bringing up my own children to remain Moroccan if their environment isn't to remain so? They will be like foreigners, they will stand out like sore thumbs. . . .

In your opinion, what is the world's major problem?

The gap—far too wide—between the strong and the weak, the rich and the poor. I would add: between the educated and the illiterate. A country like mine always faces a vicious circle. It's not money we lack—we can always find it if we pay enough interest on it. It's brains. I ask for a loan for a dam. We're told: "Show us a specific project." Fine . . . but where are the technicians to draw it up? Well, if this dam is not built, then so much less hard currency will enter the nation's treasury. And we will not be able to train so many more technicians nor draw up plans for a new dam.

Will the gap between rich and poor countries widen to the point of a world war? No. War is impossible to the extent that poor countries do not manufacture heavy armaments. And if China started something on her own she would be beaten.

Among all problems of government, which attract you the most?

In every man you will find a man of action, a man of reflection and, quite simply, a man. In my case, the man of reflection is drawn to foreign policy problems and constitutional matters. But there is domestic policy to be wrestled with; this involves simplifying the administration, getting the economy off the ground and encouraging social expansion—and there you have action. Then there is the man who is neither beast nor angel and who takes stock every night without waiting for the verdict of history on a given incident.

What takes up most of your time?

Economic problems. Morocco must take off, but the plane is heavy, it's an old model without automatic controls. It takes work.

Does Morocco's economic situation force you to make certain international choices and friendships?

I never forego my freedom of action. Morocco is a proud country. As early as the days of the Abassids, she preferred to burn her bridges with the peoples of the East rather than become a vassal.

Some claim you practise a seesaw policy towards countries that provide you with aid.

Thirty-six-year-old Hassan II is the seventeenth sovereign of the Alouite dynasty of Morocco. After independence in 1956, he successively became army chief of staff, minister of defence and, in 1960, prime minister of his father, Mohammed V. He succeeded to the throne on February 26, 1961.

One cannot do that, for there may always come a day when the seesaw comes up and you are discredited. I don't like so many others, go through a three-year Soviet period, then a three-year American period. This year I have been both to Moscow and to America but each government is fully informed of my plans.

Does the constitutional situation in Morocco have any repercussions on your foreign relations?

You mean the monarchy? That's merely a matter of semantics. Though I may be a king, the separation of powers exists in this country. I know many republics in Africa and elsewhere where the president influences or modifies court decisions.

Naturally, since I am a blood cousin of Hussein of Jordan, this link creates affinities and spares us vain quarrels. The same is true of the traditional links we maintain with the kingdom of Arabia where every Moroccan goes as a pilgrim and where a large number of Moroccans are living. Iraq has never behaved equivocally towards us. With other countries, like Tunisia, Algeria and the UAR, we do not have family ties but we do have conventions and exchanges. Of all the Arab countries, it is only with Syria that we have severed all relations, even diplomatic.

How do you feel about the "Arab nation"? I respect the Moroccan and Moslem origins of my people, I practise my religion and I recognize that Arab countries share a common language and religion. But no man in his right mind could imagine that we could be a nation. We have neither the same frontiers, nor the same nationality, nor the same legislation, nor the same flag.

What path do you think will lead a semi-feudal country like Morocco to happiness? Morocco a feudal country? Can you give me the names of ten Moroccan millionaires? Morocco is a rich country with poor inhabitants. Why, there are more than 700 millionaires in the city of Dusseldorf alone, and yet people call a country like ours a caste society when we don't have even ten.

Are you deriving any benefit from the Chinese experiment?

You know, China has always been very remote and very mysterious. They have their way of approaching problems and we have ours. As for the possibility of being engulfed by the Chinese at some future date, I think that is a problem like death. Since I can't do anything about it, why should I waste time thinking about it?

What sort of relations do you want to establish with Europe?

There is nothing better than bilateral relations with individual countries. But Europe has given us no choice in the matter. It has already formed its community, which includes Algeria but excludes Tunisia and Morocco. Then how much leeway do we have? Each of us cannot do it alone; it would mean going in through the back door. So the Maghreb countries—Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia—must unify their plans, their economies being competitive. Unification of the Maghreb would be unthinkable

within the next three years, but if it is done within ten years it will be too late. Are you satisfied with your present relations with France?

While some people may choose to live their private lives on a wave of emotions, relations between two countries are like a marriage of two peasants; it is strength and stability that matter. Those are the kinds of relations that I have always wanted France and Morocco to enjoy. But it's not easy. France loved this country so much that a climate of permanent spite has been created. This keeps relations emotional

Yet isn't France still your privileged ally? As far as the West is concerned and to the extent that an alliance requires long psychological preparation, it is obvious that we are best prepared to live together with France. There is a constant factor in our relationship with her. But this constant must be made to bear fruit.

Will the Ben Barka affair have lasting effects on relations between you and France? Two dangers threaten a head of state: he can either become too old for his job or be blinded by personal quarrels. As far as I am concerned, I never personalize my quarrels where heads of state are involved. So I will state, therefore, that the present conflict between France and Morocco is on a government level. The situation is very serious, yet it could have been avoided. French law, like ours, forbids the extradition of the nationals of either country. On the other hand, each government can judge a crime committed on its territory and transmit the case to the nation concerned.

There are at least two anomalies in the Ben Barka affair. First of all, the very idea of bringing the minister of a foreign country to trial in a French court is a legal and diplomatic blunder. This had never occurred before in the annals of history and, believe me, France will not set any precedent. Secondly, charges were made against Oufkir, a Moroccan citizen who was on Moroccan soil. France should have passed the case on to Moroccan judges while demanding that everything be brought to light. I had agreed to this. But De Gaulle, instead of calming Morocco's sensibilities, decided to try my minister in *absentia*, which is absolutely unthinkable.

No matter what proofs there may be, the chief judge should have declared himself incompetent . . . if he had been free to do so. We were put before a dilemma. Since De Gaulle had reached his verdict before the court had reached its, either the court had to repudiate De Gaulle or else our relations would continue to deteriorate for a very long time to come.

What were the repercussions of the Ben Barka affair on life in Morocco?

The only major demonstrations came in the form of student strikes. We have 500 fewer students this year than last because they went on strike instead of studying. You see, everyone has his own way of becoming a beatnik. In our country no one pays much attention to the rockers or the Beatles. They go on strike instead. This simply means that parents have abdicated all authority over their children. If my son had gone on

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could have slapped him specially and told him: "Go back to school."

What kind of role do you wish to play in the Maghreb and in the world?

I believe that, to be appreciated, one does not have to be eccentric or display international fits of temper or provoke scandals that can be stifled later. If you can manage to settle your own problems by being bold and realistic, you will gain the affection and esteem of everybody. But it is a mistake to be too ambitious when you are not in full control. What can I hope to achieve in the Maghreb? I am only a third of a whole here. I can facilitate overall solutions by improving our economic structures. To achieve political unity of the Maghreb, we need a minimum of economic unity.

Look at the Six: monarchies and republics hang together thanks to a common dose of free enterprise. If a Maghreb country decided to nationalize foreign trade, could I then preach the free movement of goods and people? If one country has free enterprise and another kolkhozes, on what basis can we unite? Algeria is in the Common Market, she has bilateral agreements with France, and reconversion is impossible. How can we draw closer to her? That's the kind of problem we face.

What do you think of Algeria's evolution? There is always a possibility of agreement before one reaches the point of no return. My father used to say: "My son, it is as important to be cautious in foreign policy as it is to be bold in domestic policy." It's like fights between husband and wife. The first time they forget it, the second time it's harder to take, the third time they sleep in separate rooms. At present, Algeria is our biggest problem. We have serious territorial and legal differences, and I do not yet see any basis for a settlement. One must put one's self in the Algerians' position. Overnight, they had a thousand and one problems to settle and the elite that could have helped solve them moved away. They are my neighbours and I wish them well. But why should I have somebody else's flies and insects in my home?

Are they right to socialize their economy? Certainly, this is a necessity, but on condition that they do not socialize ways of thinking or doing things. I, too, have nationalized the export of farm produce. People raised an uproar but, this year, seventy forwarding agents will not split between them \$140,000,000 in hard currencies. Instead, receipts are financing a dam and social programmes.

What are your relations with President Nasser? What do you think of him?

Nasser came to see me last year and we settled our differences. He admitted that, from a distance, he had not seen us as we really are and had been misled by his intelligence services. Our relations have become excellent. There is no doubt that the path he has followed in his country was the only possible one, considering the disparity between the big and small countries. With a population of 28,000,000 inhabitants, an undoubted industrial potential and, above all, a hundred-year lead in universities, Nas-

he is a wise man, perhaps a socialist despite himself. I told him: "If you have a problem, you can put it to me but don't count on me to follow you blindly." After all, what can he offer me? I don't sacrifice my freedom for hard cash, so why would I sacrifice it for nothing at all?

What do you think of the existence of the State of Israel and the problem of the Palestine refugees?

For the past twenty years the Arab countries have been ruining themselves in armaments because of Israel instead of using that money to help raise their living standard. Our logic and our way of approaching problems are different. I tell them: "If you want to fight a war, fight it now, right away. Don't wait until Israel gets the atom bomb. You are 100,000,000 against 5,000,000."

Given the close relations between the Arab countries and Morocco, their problems are ours. With regard to Israel, we are a long way from the centre but we are still within the circle. That there will one day be a clash with Israel seems inevitable to me. That Israel will disappear as a state after this clash is not as inevitable. As for the Palestine refugees, I am for the UN's solution: they must be given their rights.

Will Morocco feel threatened if Israel has the atomic bomb?

Yes, by a process of recoil, because of Arab solidarity. But on the other hand, I think that the greater the number of countries who possess atom bombs, the better off we will all be. Fear is the first step towards wisdom. When everyone has his own little bomb, it will be banned like poison gas.

Will Morocco have a bomb, too? No, it's too expensive; it would be madness. What I mean is that if thirty out of 100 countries in the UN had the bomb, then the others would have nothing to worry about.

What does the exercise of power represent to you: a mission or a passion?

Of all your questions, this is the one that interests me most. Mission and passion are two terms that go hand in hand. A man who does not have a passion for his mission cannot fulfill it. Look at the great missionaries in history. In each of them, there was the innate and the acquired. I was born with passion and my father completed my sense of mission.

We have a country to build. How can this be done without passion? I am deeply aware that, in my country, everyone from a cabinet minister to a stationmaster can resign tomorrow; I cannot.

My shop is always open, there is no closing time. I haven't slept late since my father's death. If the shutters stay closed until noon, the *mohrzani* squats, people say the king is asleep and all Morocco sleeps. So to hold out, I have to be a little pig-headed, I snarl like a bulldog and I set my jaw. I often say that, in our era, only two regimes can save a country: either a true or communism. For power means self-abnegation and a sort of anonymity, unless one falls into the sin of pride. Whether you

For the past year Morocco has been living in a state of emergency. What reasons led you to suspend the normal operation of institutions?

In two years, I was given only two laws for approval. At that rate, we would be up to our fifth law by now. The reason is that there was a sterilizing factor within parliament, created no doubt by the division of parties into a mosaic from which no important group emerged.

When will the state of emergency end? That's a trade secret.

What kind of regime will be set up by the new constitution you envisage?

In Morocco the monarchy is not just for show but a vital necessity for the people. It is the sole factor for unity. We do not yet have the national reflex of a developed country. Society here is based upon power that has a name, there is a plaque on the door, family feelings exist between king and people. Why ignore this? I shall institute a constitutional monarchy, but obviously not on English or Scandinavian lines. We have not yet reached this point. I shall maintain the plurality of political parties. Parliament will exist but its obligations to the voter will have changed. Its members will study laws and put up proposals. But I shall have eliminated the possibility of neutralization, for the king will arbitrate between the government and parliament.

In fact, will this be a direct democracy in which the king will go to the people over the heads of the parties as at present?

Yes. There can be no intermediary between the king and the people. That would break the family tie. I believe that political parties are useful to provide leadership, to spread the good word and to make the people aware of priorities. I repeat, I am for political parties. I know the members of the parties. Some of them taught me nationalism; with others I was a comrade-at-arms. I would like to work with a team composed of members of different parties.

What men do you admire the most? That is, what men provide you with an example to govern your own conduct?

I have too much admiration for my father to have very much left for anyone else. But there is one man—and this may surprise you—I would have liked to have had as a mentor: Léon Blum. One must be in love with the law to be able to understand his thinking and his sense of the obligations and duties of the state. Later, I was very attracted by Mendès-France, an outwardly cold man with an inner warmth, who incarnates the definition of the statesman: he strives for what is desirable and tries to achieve what is possible.

What image of yourself do you want history to preserve?

We are now beginning to do justice to Louis XI who was called a universal spider because, little by little, he spun the web of his country's unity despite the dukes of Burgundy, despite all the problems in the north and Aquitaine. If one were to say of me that I was a tireless ant who worked